



## OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND ADJUDICATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

September 2, 2026

Greg Matherly, Chairman  
Washington County Board of Commissioners  
100 E Main Street  
Jonesborough, TN 37659  
**via email:** [greg.matherly@wc911.org](mailto:greg.matherly@wc911.org)

**RE: Rejection of EPA Complaint No. 22-26-R4**

Dear Chairman Matherly:

As you are aware, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication (OCRA), External Civil Rights Division (ECRD) received the above-referenced complaint against Washington County Board of Commissioners (Washington BOC). The complaint alleges that Washington BOC discriminated on the basis of disability (residents with pre-existing medical vulnerabilities) in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the complaint alleges Washington BOC discriminated against vulnerable residents by approving the rezoning of agricultural land for a high-impact nuclear facility and failing to provide “reasonable accommodation” and emergency infrastructure, such as relying on a local volunteer fire department that lacks specialized support for radiation emergencies and failing to conduct seismic assessments.

This letter serves to notify you that ECRD is rejecting the complaint for investigation.

Pursuant to EPA’s nondiscrimination regulation, ECRD conducts a preliminary jurisdictional review of administrative complaints to determine whether to accept, reject, or refer it to an appropriate federal agency. See 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(d)(1). To be accepted for investigation, the complaint must meet the jurisdictional requirements described in EPA’s nondiscrimination regulation.

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<sup>1</sup> EPA Complaint No. 22-26-R4 refers to both Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. On May 5, 2026, Complainant confirmed via email that “complaint is being raised under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, based on disability.”

First, the complainant must submit a complaint in writing. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(1). Second, the entity that the complainant identifies as allegedly engaging in discrimination must be an applicant for, or recipient of, EPA financial assistance. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.15.

Third, the complainant must describe an alleged discriminatory act that, if true, may violate EPA's nondiscrimination regulation. *See* 40 C.F.R. §§ 7.120(b)(1) and 7.100. An alleged discriminatory act is one based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, or engaging in or opposing protected activity. Fourth, a complainant must file the complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(2).

After careful consideration, ECRD is rejecting this complaint because Washington County BOC is not a recipient of EPA financial assistance.

Finally, EPA's nondiscrimination regulation prohibits applicants, recipients, and other persons from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or engaging in other discriminatory conduct against anyone because they have acted or participated in an action to secure rights protected by the civil rights requirements EPA enforces. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.100. Any individual that believes a recipient has engaged in such misconduct can file a complaint with EPA.

If you have any questions, please contact Case Manager Trinita Mason by email at [mason.trinita@epa.gov](mailto:mason.trinita@epa.gov) or by phone at 202-564-9652.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juan Carlos Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JuanCarlos M. Hunt, Director  
U.S. EPA, Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication

cc: Kristi Eubanks, Deputy Regional Administrator/Deputy Civil Rights Official  
Suzanne Rubini, Regional Counsel  
U.S. EPA, Region 4